

MARY PORTER  
**SESNON**  
ART GALLERY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**IRWIN SHOW 2021**  
**FABRICATING SOLACE**

*Exhibition by this year's UC Santa Cruz Irwin Scholarship recipients  
is the result of creating comfort in the face of unprecedented  
hardships*



**Virtual Opening Reception:**

**Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery, Porter College, UC Santa Cruz**

**Exhibition Event: June 3rd, 2021 via Zoom, 5:00-6:00 PM**

**Digital Showings are Free and Open to the Public**

**[RSVP for the opening reception here](#)**

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — (April 29, 2021) The Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery is excited to introduce **IRWIN 2021: Fabricating Solace**, the 35th annual **Irwin Scholarship** exhibition, which showcases the work of a select group of UC Santa Cruz's most promising young artists: Abby McPhillips, Caroline Alfonso, Cassidy Skillman, Chloe Calhoun, Connor Alexander, Kalen Meeks, Klytie Xu, Louisa Balderas, Lucinda Rose Gold, Saul Villegas,

Sydney Nicole Geisinger, and Zoe Forsyth.

Following a year in isolation and combating unprecedented hardships, finding relief has become a vital part of people's daily routines. As we all form spaces that provide us some level of solace, how do we determine what is sincere and what is not? How do we trick ourselves into feeling safe and in control?

***Fabricating Solace*** brings together the work of 12 artists who have stitched a patchwork of their experiences of found comfort and collaboration. They create a space for conversations around the perseverance of artists in the context of our changing world. ***Fabricating Solace*** aims to explore fabric as a metaphor for connection and collectivity while also bringing to mind the often insincere implications of the word "fabricate."

***Fabricating Solace*** means "a break from exhaustion. It's finding a space to disconnect from life's ongoing stress and restore balance," says Irwin scholar Abby McPhillips. Connor Alexander agrees: "Art has been a source of solace for all of us over the past year — hopefully this show will show that!" Chloe Calhoun says, "The past year has been very isolating, and each one of us has had to create our own comfort even just to tread water. 'To fabricate' can also mean to falsify, and when everything seems to be falling apart, the day-to-day rituals that are normally reassuring can seem like rather flimsy lies." In that same vein, Lucinda Rose Gold adds that "We share a compulsion to create a swift escape from reality through our work, or to recontextualize and rewrite the past and present."

Showcasing a variety of approaches to contemporary art practice, the exhibition includes painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, video installation, stop-motion animation, artist's books, and performance.

**Due to county and statewide health ordinances regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, these works will be shown virtually through a 3D model of the Sesnon Gallery and accessible online, 24/7.** This virtual model is being designed by Digital Arts and New Media Technical Coordinator, Colleen Jennings, using an architectural software program called SketchUp.

**About the Irwin Scholarship and the Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery** As a way of ensuring that others would have the kind of art education that allowed her to flourish in the art community, the late Sue Irwin established the William Hyde And Susan Benteen Irwin Scholarship Fund in 1986 in honor of her husband. The Irwin Scholarship and group show is granted annually to undergraduate UCSC students for proven excellence in the arts.

The Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery encourages interdisciplinary discourse through the lens of the arts. The gallery is located at Porter College above the koi pond at UC Santa Cruz.

**The Sesnon Gallery is currently closed, following UC campus precautions. Your safety is our first priority and we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely. Sesnon**

Gallery web content is available 24/7. Visit [art.ucsc.edu/sesnon](https://art.ucsc.edu/sesnon)

Website: <https://art.ucsc.edu/sesnon/irwin-2021>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SesnonArtGallery/>

Instagram: @sesnonunderground / @sesnon.gallery

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